

COMMENT

A Few Feelings Left Over from Last Season and Anticipating the Next.

That little company of Irish players who are going about the world wherever their language is spoken almost like a band of troubadours has arrived in London, and is playing a "season" there. The players have been to London many times before, often enough to refer to their visit as their annual season. And there are some players in the big, dark city that like the tone of the National Irish Theatre, more people than there seemed to be here in America last fall and winter during the rather dramatic, from more points of view than one, career of the Abbey Theatre in this country. Still, there is no tremendous enthusiasm about them even in London—no widespread interest, no general recognition that something new, something altogether sound, in drama has come up out of the soil.

The popular art of the theatre to-day, as compared with such drama as that offered by the Irish Players, or by the Oberammergau people, or by the cathedral Greeks in the Middle Ages or by the ancient Greeks in the concentrated pits of their amphitheatres, is photographic rather than interpretative. The playwright of to-day is ambitious to become a kodak, able to catch life unawares, make snapshots that reveal unexpected comedy and pathos, such as the usual eye is too vague, to diverse, to see. Photographic art is a wizardlike thing, surely, full of fascination and interest. But strangely ephemeral. Few things can rivet interest and arouse delight as a new photograph can, one which is concerned with scenes and subjects you know about or one which you have just developed and printed yourself. Yet a year later a great deal of the interest has vanished from the oftentimes faded old print. Styles have changed, the people look unnatural and the situation that made the picture amusing or vital has grown different or vanished. The interest was only a surface one, after all, and naturally, as photography is something that to-day seems to be largely along the same lines as the snapshot. It hits the interest of the moment for its clever surface representations, but a year or two later it is out of date.

On the other hand, the playwright who has not perhaps so precise an eye, but who has depths of feelings to express, feelings which are his own and therefore unique, develops something when he gains the power to express these things through the medium of the drama.

The main difference between the two styles, both of which are absorbingly interesting, seems to be that the art which is photographic itself finishes what it has to say, whereas each scrap of the interpretative art is merely the beginning of a new world of thought, and sometimes a new world of feeling, understanding and emotion besides.

Probably no one would think of the work of the Irish Players as belonging to any other than the interpretative style of art. What it shows of surface things is impressionistic. The scenery, costumes and story of each play are true to life, of course, but they are suggested rather than definitely dwelt upon. That is probably because they are not the important part of the plays. What is important, what the plays were written for, is something that goes down deep beneath the surface. It is the interpretation of the fire, the spirit and the feelings of the people, the calibre of their thinking, the mysteries that hang in the air about them.

Writers on both sides of the Atlantic who have expressed their opinions of the plays of the Irish National Theatre have said that they have caught up the feelings of the people and explained the Irish character; that they have shown how it feels to be Irish and live as a peasant in Ireland, filled with its mists and its mysteries, its limitations and its various tempers, comic, pensive, generous and naïve.

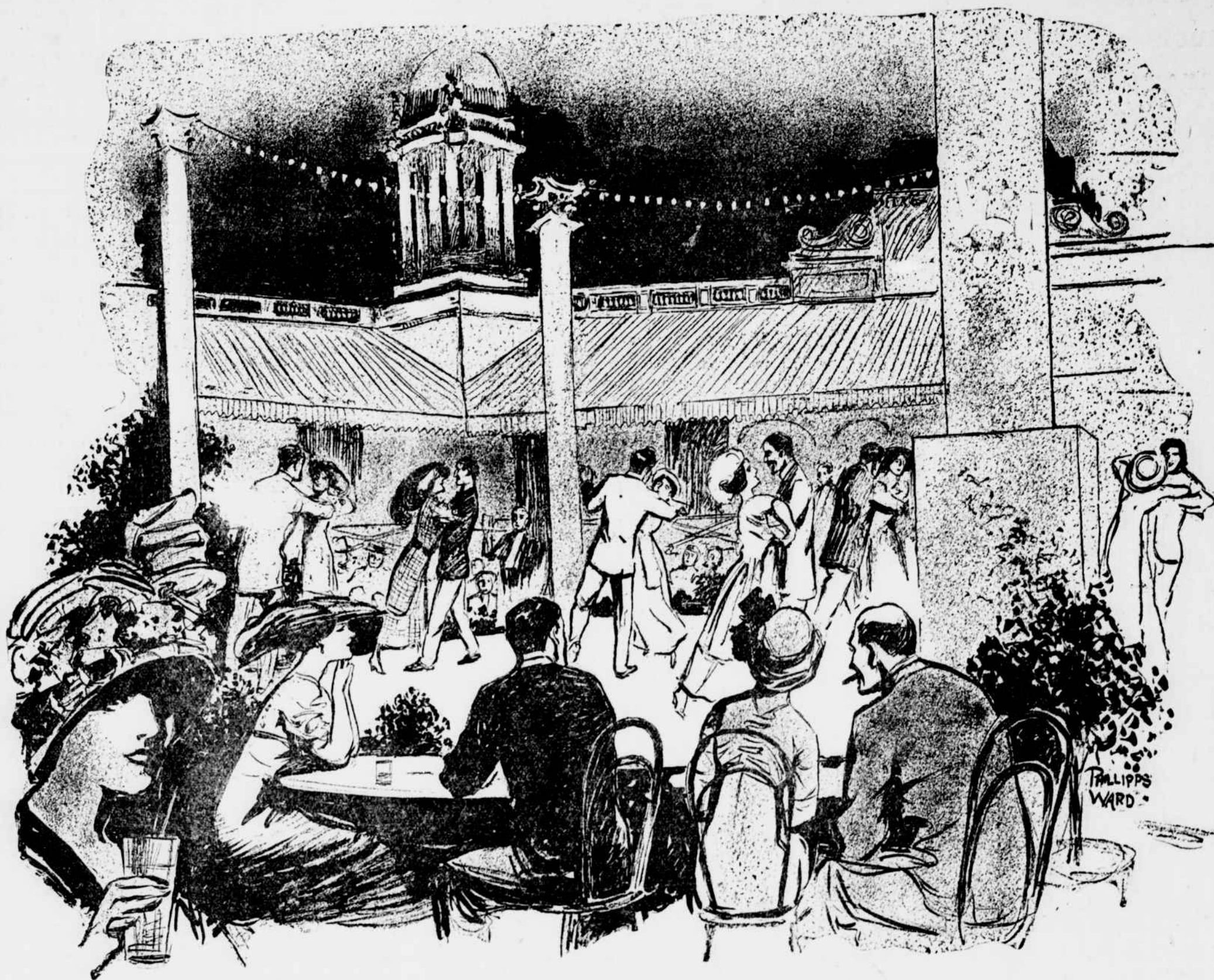
Therefore, to see a play that has such intelligence in the stuff of which it is made is an unusually rich experience, because much as it is in itself, it is merely the beginning of a new outlook for each one of us. And those players in this country who enjoy such an experience grow restless at the scarcity of plays—and of all other sort of material—which can give it to them. There is very little offered here on the stage into which the element of suggestion enters. The plays are eloquent of surfaces. They tell of costumes, decorative interiors and architectural exteriors. They describe manners and customs and all the daily detail of surface life. Some of them offer profound theories which seek to reform the conventions. But conventions are only surface things, so that even the problem plays do not go into the depths, and one can watch all these things without a change of feeling.

Those theatregoers who prefer the interpretative style of drama to the other find in their favorite art all that the photographic sort offers and all its own richness besides. The impressionistic costume and scenery seem to leave a more definite idea of the originals than a detailed reproduction on the stage ever does. The stages that are fitted up so that you would be glad to back a moving van to the curb, take all the things home and furnish your own place with them, so completely genuine and beautiful are they, make a very limited appeal to an audience. To see these stages is so little change to the eye from looking around the home rooms, or friends' quarters or the public places that we frequent, that the average spectator does not look at them at all. If street scenes are shown the streets of his own or of some other city are so accurately reproduced that the man in the audience might as well be outside as in the theatre for all the change he gets by being there.

The impressionistic scenery and costume, however, such as the Irish Players use, give the general effect of the realities they represent and, in addition, some definite suggestion that has come out of these things to the mind of the scenic designer who has fashioned them.

Whether the mass of players would wish to turn from the elaborate reproduction

AT THE THEATRES



DANCING BETWEEN COURSES AT THE MADISON SQUARE GARDEN ROOF.

stage effects and photographic plays of to-day—a style which leaves nothing to the imagination—and nourish the suggestive art which would in return nourish them, is certainly a question. Probably no sudden change to the new-old style could be made. People will have to become accustomed to it slowly. Occasional laugh at Orientalism for ancestor worship while they themselves worship custom. But no one should laugh at either. Changes in too rapid succession would not benefit any branch of art. Among those who have supreme faith in the public—or in this particular case, in audiences—there is a feeling of confidence that the stage art represented by such as the Irish Players, if it is as sound and inspired and true as it seems to its admirers now, will be accepted a little later by all.

THE COMING WEEK.

COMEDY AND DRAMA.

Collier's Comedy Theatre.—Graham Moffatt's comedy, "Bunny Pulls the Strings," with Molly Pearson as Bunny. Other members of the cast who will play out the summer are Amy Singleton, Thelma Martin, Beatrice Allen, Kate Lang, Norman Blaine, George Ingleton, Stanley Harrison, James Finlayson and Leonard Booker.

Gaiety Theatre.—Augustin MacHugh's farce, "Officer 66," with Wallace Edginger and George Nash. Has "Go."

Playhouse.—George Broadhurst's popular play, "Bought and Paid For." A unique play of the times.

West End Theatre.—By special request of subscribers the Corne Payton Stock Company at the West End Theatre will offer next week an elaborate revival of Augustus J. Evans's romantic story of the South, "St. Elmo."

MUSICAL PLAYS.

Globe Theatre.—Bruno Granichstaedten's operetta, "The Rose Maid." A pleasant evening's entertainment. The Globe has recognized the summer season by removing its roof and becoming an open air theatre.

Moulin Rouge.—Dorothy Jordan and Bernard Granville, recent additions to the cast of "A Winsome Widow" at the Ziegfeld Moulin Rouge, have assisted materially in improving an already popular performance. Frank Tinney, the comedian, continues to offer an entirely different line of laugh-evoking chatter nightly. Among the other important entertainers will be noted Harry Conner, Elizabeth Brice, Charles King, Leon Errol, Ida Adams, Ethel Amorita Kelley, Harry Kelly, Kathleen Clifford, Dolly Twine, Jack Clifford, Irene Weston, Mlle. Nana, Mons. Alexis, Cathleen Pope and George Kirner.

MOTION PICTURES.

Lyceum Theatre.—An inviting summer attraction is provided at the Broadway Theatre, where every afternoon and evening the Arctic motion pictures are shown. To view the exciting hunt of the walrus and polar bear over fields of ice in the vicinity of Wrangel Island, 13 degrees south of the pole, while currents of refrigerated air sweep through the darkened auditorium, is an experience that is proving irresistible to thousands. Captain F. E. Klein Schmidt personally conducts his auditors on this two hours' hunt in Alaska and Siberia, explaining in detail the many startling episodes which flash upon the screen.

Lyceum Theatre.—The Paul J. Rainey Electric Hunt Pictures continue at the Lyceum.

fourth month. These marvellous motion pictures of animal life in British East Africa have attracted more attention than anything of the kind that has been shown before in the motion picture line. The different films disclose the gamut of human emotions from grim tragedy to comedy. They are not alone entertaining, but highly educational, and appeal with equal interest to young and old.

VARIETY BY "COMMAND"

To-morrow Is the Great Vaudeville Day in London at the Palace Theatre.

(Special to The Tribune.) London, June 23.—The royal command performance, to be given at the Palace Theatre on July 1, is the first public recognition of the variety theatre, though several variety artists have appeared at Sandringham and elsewhere. The programme, made up by Alfred Butt, includes twenty-three "turns," and the criticism, which has been fast and furious, has been chiefly directed at the omissions from the list.

The mere fact of a royal command variety performance being given must be taken to mean that there has been a vast improvement in that style of theatre in the last twenty-five years. Such being the case, the London critics ask why Albert Chevalier, who has done so much to bring about the change, is omitted from the list at the Palace. Chevalier has more than

one appeared before royalty, and is credited with being the greatest English performer on the variety stage, yet at this first public recognition of his metier he is the most shining omission.

Mlle. Adeline Genée is also left out of the list, while Pavlova is included. The inclusion of Pavlova was, of course, inevitable, but it is pointed out that Pavlova is a visitor, while Genée is a British institution. She is English by marriage and has been "commanded" many times, and her name is synonymous with the ballet in England.

Marie Lloyd is another who is missing from the list, and she is an eminently typical representative of the "bells," the "leading lady" of her branch of the theatrical profession.

The list of performers chosen to appear follows:

Singing comedians, Wilkie Bard, G. H. Chirwin, Harry Lauder, George Hober, and Little Tich, singing comedienne, Miss "Happy" Fanny Fields, Miss Charles Mayne (assisted at the piano by "That" J. W. Tate), and Miss Vesta Tilley, the male impersonator, jugglers, Charles Aldrich, who combines other things with juggling, and Paul Cinquevalli, dancers, Mme. Pavlova, who will give "Le Nutt," "Le Cygne" and "L'Automne Bachante" (with M. Novikoff), Fred Farrer and Miss Ida Crisp, who will appear in something that is not the "Yankee Tangle"; the eight Palace Girls, and La Pia, with her "Lois Fuller act"; acrobats, Boganny's Lomantic Bakers, who will give "Le Opium Den," and Pippifax and Panio Gether known as Humpty Bumpst; illusionist, David Devant, from St. George's Hall; "sketch" players, Alfred Lester in "A Restaurant Episode," and

Harry Tate in "Motoring"; piano entertainer, Barclay Gammon; ventriloquist, Arthur Prince, who will give his naval dialogue; imitator, Miss Cissie Loftus, who will very likely come late in the programme and revive memories of its earlier "turns." Finally some 150 well known music hall performers will appear on the lawn of a beautiful garden, wearing the guises by which they are best known to the public, and will conclude by singing the national anthem.

The work of transforming the theatre for the special performance is already in progress. The interior will represent a Watteau garden. More than 15,000 is being spent on the preparations for this single performance. The auditorium will have a new background of Pavement marble almost smothered in flowers. Twenty-four thousand artificial roses and eighteen thousand separate sprays of other flowers have been ordered, while there will be special electric installation for the eight thousand fairy lamps called for by the scheme. All the scenery will be new and there will be a special drop curtain treated as Beauvais tapestry to represent Fontaine's picture of Versailles now at South Kensington. The drop curtain will fall in a frame specially made for the occasion.

The entrance for the King and Queen will be by a side doorway in Shaftesbury avenue. They will find themselves first in a suite of rooms leading to the double box that will be thrown forward so that the royal party will have a perfect view of the stage and be themselves in the range of nearly every spectator. This arrangement was consented to by the King after he was told of the public interest. The royal box and the reception rooms will be finished with Louis XVI panels. The front of the box will be decorated with gold hanging

baskets and cornucopias filled with roses and carnations.

In the general design of decoration for the house the flowers on the first circle will be pink, the second tier yellow and deep red for the third. On the ceiling blue flowers will lead to rays of yellow roses branching from a mass of wisteria in the centre.

The tickets of admission will be enclosed in simple envelopes of white card, tied with a purple ribbon and decorated outside with a small stamp of the royal arms. Inside there will be a symbolic drawing. The ordinary programme will have a similar design, while the souvenir programme will be a volume with portraits of the artists appearing and a history of the music hall stage.

AGAIN AT UNION SQUARE

Daniel Frohman to Produce

Vaudeville Sketch There.

Daniel Frohman while wending his way back to the old Union Square Theatre for the final rehearsals of Percival Knight's new one-act play, "Detective Keen," which will have its metropolitan premiere at the reincarnated Keith house on Monday night, finds old memories recalled at this house where he first ventured into theatricals himself. Forty years ago this spring the celebrated Vokes Family of English parlour players, who specialized one-act sketches like "My Lord in Livery," "The Circus Rider" and "My Milliner's Bill," made their first American appearance, and triumphed at this theatre. Then for a double decade the Union Square was devoted to drama, under the direction of A. M. Palmer (who initiated Mr. Frohman into the arena of theatrical craft), and the list of plays and prominent players appearing on the 14th street stage during this period comprises the major history of the American drama for the last generation.

Among them were Alice Oates, the operatic comedienne, in a repertory of what would now be called "musical comedies"; Agnes Ethel, in Sardou's "Andrea"; Fanny Davenport, in "Frou-Frou"; Kate Claxton, in "Fernande"; J. H. Stoddard, as Eccles, in "Caste"; Charlotte Thompson, in "Eyre"; Rose Eytinge, Charles Thorne, Stuart Robson, Clara Morris and McKee Rankin, in a wide range of dramas, including Kate Claxton as a stellar vehicle for so many seasons. Another noted cast of this play at the Union Square included James O'Neill, Sara Jewett and Bijou Heron. Eben Plympton made his first American appearance here in "Rose Michel," while Fred de Belleville, Mme. Janaschek and the great Salvini also braved New York for the first time from these historic boards. Among the last of the dramatic offerings was "The Two Orphans," which served Kate Claxton as a stellar vehicle for so many seasons.

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VARIETIES, ROOFS, PARKS

What the Amusement Places Offer for the Safe and Sane Fourth.

New York is getting to be such a renowned summer resort—however it got the reputation—and so attractive withal to those who have not already weathered a winter of it, that the amusement places are having a lively time accommodating the crowds. The indoor vaudeville and the parks both are making special efforts to live up to the hopes and expectations of the Fourth of July crowds that will swamp all entertainments next Thursday. In detail the bills of the various resorts will be as follows:

Columbia.

The Merry-Go-Rounders, the summer burlesque production at the Columbia Theatre, begins its fourth week at that house to-morrow afternoon. Several new comedy scenes will be introduced by George P. Murphy, Ralph Austin and Leona Stephens, and a new musical number by Irving Berlin, composer of "Alexander's Ragtime Band" and other popular songs, will be heard for the first time. It is called "The Soldier Ragtime Man," and it will be rendered by the principals and entire chorus. Business at the Columbia continues very large notwithstanding the heat, and the Merry-Go-Rounders will remain there until the opening of the regular season, in August.

Fifth Avenue.

Continuing its recently announced policy of presenting at least one act new to vaudeville each week, Proctor's Fifth Avenue Theatre next week will present three features new to the two-day style of entertainment. The first of these will be Thomas A. Wise in an original character sketch by Abigail Marshall, "Dad and Mother," which will give Mr. Wise ample scope for his fun-making abilities and a legitimate opportunity to introduce some bits of pathos. Mr. Wise, as usual in his vaudeville flights, will be supported by an excellent little company.

Something which should interest all music lovers will be the debut of Carl Schuetze, hitherto harp soloist of the Paul-Harmonie Society and Metropolitan Opera House orchestra. Mr. Schuetze will be assisted by Miss Hettie Deumm, soprano, and numerous of his confreres of the musical world have promised to augment the orchestra to full concert strength.

The third new number on the bill will be De Witt Mott and Mary Maxfield, in a bit of airy persiflage suited to the times, "The Salesman and the Musician," in which the repartee is exchanged so rapidly that the "feyest" audience must pay strict attention to clear all the points. Others on a gala holiday bill well calculated to amuse the stay-at-homes over the Fourth will be such established favorites as Frank Mayne and company, in that remarkable protean drama, "The Third Degree"; Burnham and Greenwood, feminine eccentrics and pianologists; Welch, Mealy and Montrose, in a slang classic of baseball experiences; Lane and O'Donnell, the luscious tumbler, and Ben Beyer and company, cycling messenger boys.

Hammerstein's Roof Garden.

Harry Houdini and fifteen other strong numbers are prominent in the complete change of bill announced for Hammerstein's Roof Garden and Victoria Theatre, beginning Monday afternoon, July 1. Houdini, famed as the original jail breaker and handcuff king, will head the bill. He has a box of new sensations to reveal. Manacled in every way, shape and form, he will escape from inconceivable places. Houdini defies police chiefs, jail wardens, asylum keepers and the public is challenged to bring regulation handcuffs, leg irons, chains, etc., to test Houdini's powers. For the Hammerstein engagement Houdini promises feats never before attempted in public. The other numbers on an entertaining and varied programme include McCay and Cantwell, who return from the West with new songs, dances and jokes. Joe Jackson, said to be one of the most successful funny men in vaudeville, Arthur Deagan makes his last appearance in vaudeville, previous to his joining Mile Trentini's company. Deagan's winning voice is his principal asset. The Berlins, in a surprise musical act, have one of those novel offerings that seem to be just what the public wants. The Eight Original Texas Tommy Dancers are held over another week. They will introduce new and sensational dancing tricks. The Victoria four have excellent voices. They harmonize well and present a turn that has placed them in the front ranks of vaudeville. They return with brand new selections. Brice and Gonne have improved their act and are now established favorites. Bert Melrose, the three Ernestos, Adeline and Dahn and the two Baabs are included in the array, not forgetting "the act beautiful," in Adonia and Dog, the acme of perfection in dog training and presentation. Creator's Band continues another week with a complete change of programme. Hammerstein's Roof Garden is thronged nightly with visitors to the city, all anxious to see the carnival scene. The Old Farm in winter garb is the most popular summer attraction Mr. Hammerstein has ever offered. Grace Helane and Eddie Bassett, assisted by Dorothy Wallace, Harriet Moore, Vivian Revell, Vera Rossmore, Blanche Nesbitt and Lillian West, all garbed in unique creations, form the madcap that draws the crowds. The usual madcap concerts are given matinee and night.

Keith's Union Square.

Makers of fun, all forms of mirth and a grand mélange of frolic characterizes the celebration of the fifth week of first class vaudeville at B. F. Keith's Union Square Theatre. Daniel Frohman will give the first New York presentation of a new one-act play, entitled "Detective Keen," by Percival Knight. The sketch is intensely interesting, grips the spectator from the start, is interspersed with comedy and has many startling surprises. In the cast will be Ruby Hoffman and Palmer Collins, Arthur Hoops, William Sluder and Sterling Chesedine. Mlle. Ma Belle, having received the title of "the most beautiful woman in the world" during her tour of Europe, will make her first and only New York appearance in a spectacular dancing novelty, entitled "The Garden of Eden," in six scenes.

STAGE NOTES.

One of the most graphic and sumptuous of the stage settings in William Faversham's "Julius Caesar," announced for production early in the fall, will be the Senate chamber scene, which is modeled after the arrangement in Gérôme's famous painting, "The Death of Caesar."

That the trend of the taste of the general theatregoing public is for better dramas is the opinion advanced by A. H. Woods, the well known theatrical producer.

"I believe the day of the hot-potch musical show that depends for its success on the number of good looking, scantily clad chorus girls and the total absence of any consistent plot is rapidly drawing to a close," declared Mr. Woods.

"From my observations and experience—most of it costly, too—I have come to the conclusion that the theatregoing public of to-day demands a clean comedy, with a consistent plot and tuneful music. Good looking girls are not to be tabooed by any means, but they should be a part of the general effect and not the whole effect."

STARTING IN BUSINESS.

Pretty Miss—Is this the license bureau, please?

Pretty Miss—Well, I've just finished my first book of poems and I want to take out a Poetic License. How much will it be?



Fannie Brice at the New Brighton Theatre, Week of July 1-5.



Josephine Harriman in "A Winsome Widow" Ziegfeld Moulin Rouge.